



Rum, Gin and Maize: Deities and Ritual Change in the Gold Coast during the Atlantic Era (16th century to 1850)

Citation

Akyeampong, Emmanuel, and Samuel A. Ntewusu. 2014. "Rum, Gin and Maize: Deities and Ritual Change in the Gold Coast During the Atlantic Era (16th Century to 1850)." *Afriques* (05) (December 15). doi:10.4000/afriques.1651.

Published Version

doi:10.4000/afriques.1651

Permanent link

<http://nrs.harvard.edu/urn-3:HUL.InstRepos:23957150>

Terms of Use

This article was downloaded from Harvard University's DASH repository, and is made available under the terms and conditions applicable to Open Access Policy Articles, as set forth at <http://nrs.harvard.edu/urn-3:HUL.InstRepos:dash.current.terms-of-use#OAP>

Share Your Story

The Harvard community has made this article openly available.
Please share how this access benefits you. [Submit a story](#).

[Accessibility](#)

Rum, Gin and Maize: Deities and Ritual Change in the Gold Coast during the Atlantic Era (16th Century to 1850).

Emmanuel Akyeampong and Samuel A. Ntewusu

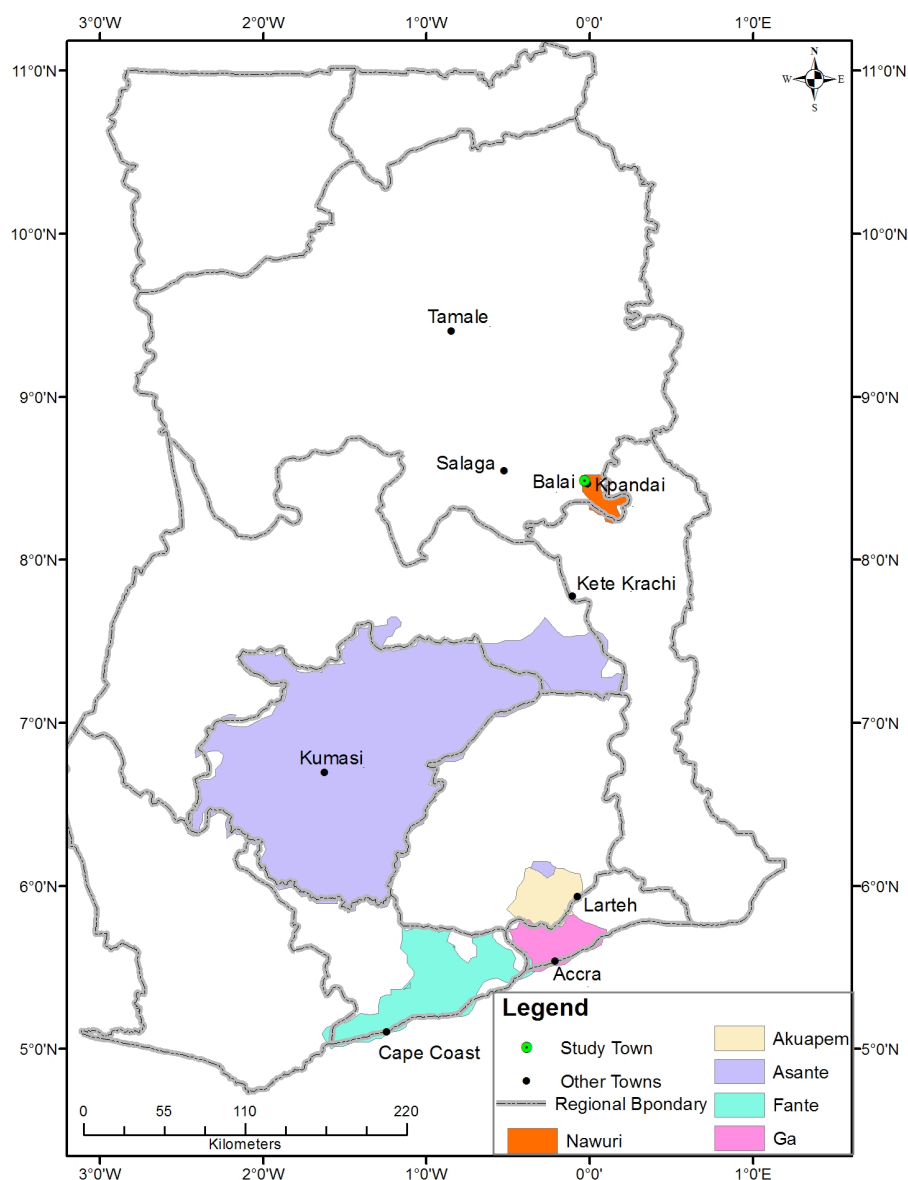
Abstract

This paper examines the incorporation of rum and gin as powerful spiritual drinks in pre-colonial Gold Coast, particularly in the context of state formation and warfare, and the growing importance of maize, side by side with the indigenous yam, as the food of gods. Through food and drink, we analyze changing notions of spiritual efficacy, the ascendancy of war deities, and interrogate how shifts in socio-political contexts aligned with those in the spiritual realm. Why were European liquors like gin, rum, and schnapps incorporated into ritual on the Gold Coast and not others? We juxtapose geographically dispersed ritual landscapes, contrasting the Atlantic coast and its immediate hinterland with a case study from the northern Guan in our endeavor to understand how far-reaching were Atlantic processes, as well as the “logic” of ritual transformation.

Introduction

This paper examines the transformation of the ritual landscape in the Gold Coast through the use of foods and liquors introduced through the Atlantic trade from the 16th century through 1850, when the Danes withdrew from the Gold Coast. What ritual foods and drinks were offered to Gold Coast deities and how did these change during the Atlantic era? What can we learn from these transformations about the African material and symbolic experience of the Atlantic world and the impact on the cognitive realm? What insights can we glean about political change on the Gold Coast through the interpenetration of state formation, slave trade and liquor trade? Our cut off point of 1850 is arbitrary, but we chose the departure of the Danes from the Gold Coast as our end date, as it brought to an end almost two centuries of the co-existence of Danish, Dutch and British influences on the Gold Coast. After the Danish departure in 1850, the Dutch would subsequently also withdraw from the Gold Coast in the early 1870s, paving the way for the declaration of the Gold Coast as a British colony in 1874. This paper draws heavily on contemporary European sources on the Gold Coast before the imposition of colonial rule, as well as ethnographic material from the 19th and 20th centuries, and the authors’ own field research. To illumine developments on the Atlantic

coast, as well as its repercussions in the interior, we, like Ann Stahl, selected a northern Guan community -- Balai Nawuri -- in our bid to interrogate contrasting ritual landscapes and the geographic reach of the Atlantic in the transformation of ritual.¹



MAP SHOULD BE PLACE HERE

Historians have viewed the Guan as the earliest inhabitants of the Gold Coast.² The

¹ A. B. Stahl, 2001.

² Guans are believed to be the first settlers in modern day Ghana. They are scattered across all the regions in Ghana. Guans speak distinct languages which are different from the major languages in Ghana. However, some of these Guan languages are influenced by major languages in Ghana, depending on where a particular Guan tribe is located. Guans in the Volta Region include Kraakye/Krachi, Akpafu/Lolobi, Buem, Nkonya, Likpe, Logba and Anum-Boso. In the central region we have the Effutu, Awutu and Senya in Winneba and Bawjiase

accepted antiquity of Guan deities, and the existence of a religious hierarchy in which Guan deities such as Akonedi, Brukum, Dente and Kankpe are revered across the breadth of the Gold Coast/Ghana, underscore the perceived autochthony of the Guan, who as first settlers entered into special relations with resident deities that enabled settlement. Guan settlements today extend from the Akuapem Mountains with settlements like Larteh through communities such as the Kratchi, Gonja and Nawuri in northern Ghana. These are communities in which deities showed a preference for yam as a ritual food, and for ritual drinks made from local cereals – millet and sorghum. Atlantic trade brought in European spirituous liquor, and ritual references to rum, brandy, schnapps and gin become common.³ The intensification of state formation among the Akan from the 1600s with the importation of European firearms encouraged the militarization of Gold Coast societies and the mobility of war deities across cultural and linguistic groups.⁴ Golden-colored rum and blood sacrifices came to be associated with war deities.⁵ Maize not only became an important logistic for long distance travelers and soldiers in the field, but also a ritual food for some deities. What was the impact of these Atlantic developments on the older ritual landscape? How do ritual shifts align with changing socio-political contexts? Does an interior or northern perspective bring into sharp relief how different and extraordinary Atlantic developments were before the colonial period, or can we detect influences of the Atlantic even in geographically dispersed areas that underscore the momentous impact of Atlantic processes, such as the incorporation of Atlantic foods or firearms?

Palm Wine, “Pito”/Corn Wine and Communion in the Early Atlantic Period

areas. There are Larteh and Kyerepong in the Eastern region. The Gonja, Nawuri, Nchumburu and Mpre people in the Northern and Brong Ahafo regions. some indigenes of Kpeshie in Greater Accra also claim Guan ancestry. For more on the Guans see F.K. Buah 1980, p 20-28 ; K. Arhin, 1974, p 50

³ E.Akyeampong, 1996.; D. van den Bersselaar, 2007.

⁴ See the example of the Anlo war deity Nyigbla in S. E. Greene, 1996. More recently, R.Shumway, 2011, has examined the transformation of Nananom Mpow from an ancestral shrine to a war deity during the era of the Atlantic slave trade.

⁵ E.Akyeampong, 2002, p.51-59.

It is difficult to reconstruct a baseline for the social and ritual use of indigenous alcoholic drinks and cereals before European liquor and food imports from the Americas in the Gold Coast, especially as we are dependent on early European sources for such information. But some of the earliest European sources on the Gold Coast do provide glimpses into the social and ritual use of local alcoholic drinks.⁶ The Dutchman Pieter de Marees' account of his trips to the coast of Guinea including the Gold Coast in the late sixteenth century (published in 1602) is a rich source that was subsequently heavily plagiarized by other European writers in the 17th and 18th centuries: Dapper (1668), Villault (1668), Müller (1673), and Barbot (1732).⁷ He provides an intriguing account of the social drinking of palm wine on the Gold Coast that speaks to commensality among men, affective gender relations, and the utility of alcoholic drinks in the spiritual realm. He notes that on the whole water is the main drink, though "in some places they brew a drink composed of water and a little maize, which, when fermented resembles Beer. They drink this often and called it Poitou". *Pito* is a nutritious African beer brewed from sorghum or millet, and it is unclear whether "maize" in this passage is a reference to a maize-like cereal (sorghum) or reflects an actual coastal use of maize in the brewing of beer, which the Ga of the Accra region do and call *ɲmāda*. This would then indicate an early incorporation of maize from the Americas into local brewing.⁸ De Marees continued:

Others buy a pot of palm wine. As it will not keep for a long time, they go together in groups of four or five men, buy one or two pots ... and share the cost. They pour the

⁶ Pito and Palm wine are local alcoholic beverages. Pito is a type of beer made from fermented millet or sorghum in northern Ghana and some parts of Nigeria. Pito could also be prepared from maize. By contrast palm wine is not produced from cereals. It is an alcoholic beverage created from the sap of various species of palm tree. There are more consumers of palm wine than pito. While consumption of pito is limited to West Africa, palm wine is drunk in most parts of Africa and Asia. Unlike palm wine pito plays a very important role in the spiritual life of the people of northern Ghana. It is for example used in the pouring of libation and as will be realized it is an important ingredient in the celebration of the yam festival of the Nawuris.

⁷ P. de Marees, 1602. Translated and edited A. van Dantzig, 1987, p.xvii.

⁸ D. Juhé-Beaulaton, 1990, p.177-98, notes how by the late 17th century maize had displaced sorghum and millet along the West African coast. [See comment (1)]. [If maize had displaced sorghum and millet in brewing by the Ga by the early 17th century, the resulting drink seemed to have retained the name of the brew based on sorghum (*pito*) in these early transitional years See comment (2)]. [Fante farmers near Elmina, early experimenters with maize, named the crop *oborowi*, "the European's [foreigner's] millet." J. D. La Fleur, 2003, p.133. See also, J. D. La Fleur, 2012.

wine into a big calabash [gourd]. They sit down around the calabash and each man sends a small pot home to his dearest or truest wife. They scoop the first drink out of the calabash with another one, which is smaller. He [the drinker] does not drink the calabash completely empty, but leaves a little inside, which he throws on the ground, saying 'I.O.V.' [Ga: hiao!; English: amen"], as if he were giving this to the *Fetissos* [charms or amulets] on their arms and feet, they will spit the first mouthful on them, as if giving them a drink too; for they think that if they did not do this or forgot to do so, their *Fetissos* would not let them drink wine together in peace.⁹

Commensality in this context was both social and spiritual, and we are introduced to a truncated form of libation in the pouring of a little bit of palm wine on the ground to the deities and ancestors and in the spraying of charms and amulets with palm wine the perception that spiritual forces share the partiality to palm wine. Even though European liquor had already been introduced in the Gold Coast, it is striking that in the late 16th century de Marees does not list European liquor as a major trading item for the Dutch, compared to its later significance entwined with the rising importance of the Atlantic slave trade.¹⁰ De Marees questioned some Gold Coasters about their religious beliefs: life after death, and the nature of their deities.

We once sat down with them and talked, asking them about their religion and their opinion concerning such things. Firstly we asked where they go and where their body journeys when they have passed away and are dead. They answered that it is quite dead and they do not know of any resurrection on the Last Day, as we do. They do know that they do go to another world when they die (although they do not know where) and in that respect their condition is different from that of Animals; but they are unable to explain to you the place where they go, whether it be under ground or up in Heaven. Secondly, when asked about their God, they said he is black as they are and is not good, but cause them much harm and grief.¹¹

Here we see the belief among the Akan of the coast that a deity is neither evil nor good but capable of both. Hence the need for sacrifice and ritual appeasement to ensure the favors of the deity.

On the provenance of maize in the Gold Coast, de Marees notes that it was brought

⁹Ibid, 42-43.

¹⁰ Ibid., 53. On the importance of European liquor during the Atlantic slave trade and after, see J. C. Curto, 2004; L. Pan, 1975.

¹¹ Ibid., p.72. A subsequent reference to matrilineal inheritance among the subjects of his study confirms that the Akan were the focus of de Marees' book on the Gold Coast (p. 182).

from the West Indies or the Americas to Sao Tome, an uninhabited island in West Africa discovered by the Portuguese around 1470. The crown took over formal control of the island in 1522 and by the mid-16th century the Portuguese had transformed Sao Tome into Africa's leading exporter of sugar. Portuguese residents from Sao Tome subsequently brought maize to their settlements on the Gold Coast and cultivated it there for their needs. De Marees was emphatic that "before the arrival of the Portuguese the inhabitants of these countries did not know it [maize]."¹² On all accounts De Marees could be considered as one of the most important sources documenting the introduction of maize in Africa. Kropp Dakubu in tracing the path of the introduction of maize into West Africa admits that maize was ultimately introduced from the New World but a number of its local names such as 'masar' point to the north and east including Egypt and not directly from the Atlantic coast. She indicates that it is also possible that maize appeared in different places at different times and by various routes and that it was introduced into the lower Nile valley from North Africa and then spread westwards into the western Savannah and South from Lake Chad..¹³ Other valuable contributions to our understanding of the diffusion of maize in Africa, such as its dual coastal and trans-Saharan provenance, are the works of Monique Chastanet and Dominique Juhé-Beaulaton.¹⁴ Chastanet's discusses the possibility that maize was introduced to the West African Sahel through Morocco. She notes the possibility that African long distance traders like the Malinke could have spread maize to the interior of Africa from their contact with the Portuguese even though maize could also have spread through the French presence. She concluded that maize had probably reached the valley of the River Senegal by the late 17th

¹² Ibid., 113. It should be noted that Marvin Miracle, one of the first to conduct a major study (doctoral dissertation) on maize in the economic development of tropical Africa opined that despite the common assumption "we still can neither verify nor refute the commonly repeated assertion that the Portuguese introduced maize to West Africa from the New World." M. P. Miracle, 1963, p.134. Subsequent research as referenced in this article has qualified this position considerably.

¹³ M.E. Kropp-Dakubu, 2006, p.68. For more on the diffusion of maize in other parts of Africa see, M. Chastanet, 1998.

¹⁴ M. Chastanet, 1998.

D. Juhé-Beaulaton, 1998,

century or early 18th century. She points out that the Soninke and other traders associated with the trans-Saharan and European trade could have played an important role in its introduction to Senegal.¹⁵ Juhé-Beaulaton in reviewing the works of earlier travelers' reports from the 16th to the 19th century on the Gulf of Guinea, the Gold Coast and the Slave Coast (Togo, Ghana and Benin) pointed out the usefulness of their sources to an understanding of plants in Africa. However, the reports had specific flaws because the authors were not naturalists and the plants cited were often described in comparison with European plants.¹⁶ Sometimes the identification of cereals remained confusing in nomenclature, but the illustrations provided by the authors would prove in particular instances that the cereal in question was maize though diverse names such as millet, sorghum or rice may have been attributed to it. By the 19th century, the spread of maize to the entire coastline of Africa was complete and the cereal was well known to all as maize thus ending the problem of identification of the crop.¹⁷

Rum, Schnapps-Gin, and Maize: War, the State, and the Transformation of Ritual in Precolonial Gold Coast

Atlantic trade and its interaction with the older trans-Saharan trade placed the Gold Coast within two international trading networks. The Akan forest first exported gold northwards through the trans-Saharan networks. Mande traders were instrumental in extending trans-Saharan trade routes southwards to tap the Akan goldfields and Mande blacksmiths introduced the practice of deep-level mining (*nkoron*).¹⁸ Kola would come to displace gold exports to the north, which were diverted southwards with the opening of European trade on the Atlantic coast of West Africa. The favorable terms of trade whereby the Asante exchanged kola, which grew wild in the Akan forest, for slaves, leather goods,

¹⁵ M.Chastanet, 1998, p.272-275.

¹⁶ D. Juhé-Beaulaton, 1998, p.1

¹⁷ D. Juhé-Beaulaton, 1998, p. 8

¹⁸ I. Wilks, 1993, ch. 1; T. Garrard, 1980.

blankets and other valuables from the north led to the Asante description of kola as “God’s gift” to them.¹⁹ Through the Atlantic trade would come a trade item that had not been available from the north, European firearms, and this would transform the nature of warfare and revolutionize Akan state formation from the 1600s. The repercussions were wide, promoting the militarization of neighboring states and communities. The availability of captives altered the nature of Gold Coast-European trade, and by the end of the 17th century the Gold Coast was exporting slaves, sometimes in exchange for gold.²⁰

European sources record the disruptive nature of Akan warfare and state formation on trade. Akwamu defeated the Ga kingdom of Accra with its capital in Ayawase and annexed its coastal dependencies between 1677 and 1681.²¹ Then came Denkyira’s wars of expansion at the end of the 17th and the beginning of the 18th centuries. Dutch traders watched with concern in the mid-17th century.

The Accanists [Akan], who are real traders, used to trade in all these areas and they alone controlled all trade, traveling with large numbers of slaves to carry their goods through all these places. But as a result of the wars which the blacks so often start for trifling reasons, this trade is suddenly stopped... the passages are closed ... and especially since musket and gunpowder have been introduced, things have become much worse, the natives having become more and more warlike.²²

The situation worsened, and at the beginning of the 18th century, reports of an impending conflict between Denkyira and Asante unsettled the Dutch.

Concerning the condition of Trade on this Coast, it is with the greatest sadness that we have to report that it has never been as bad as it is at present. Because of the conflict between Assjante and Dinkira, in which Akim got also involved, the three most powerful countries, which are also the richest in gold are now involved in heavy warfare. The Dinkirase have for long been bellicose and proud of their victories, and

¹⁹ E. K. Abaka, 2005. Kola nuts serve a number of uses in Ghana. As a ritual product, it is used in rites of cleansing, pacification, and sacrifice to spirit deities. But of greater importance is the role of kola as a stimulant and that which satisfy hunger and thirst. It is also a basic requirement in marriages where about one hundred kolanuts are demanded as part of the dowry among northern Ghanaian ethnic groups such as the Dagomba, Gonja and Nawuri

²⁰ R. Kea, 1982. This change in Gold Coast trade was partly a response to internal economic dynamics, as the growth of local trade networks led to an Akan interest in retaining gold dust to facilitate internal trade. The discovery of gold in Brazil also put Brazilian gold in circulation in Atlantic Africa.

²¹ On Akwamu’s rise, see I. Wilks, 2001.

²² H. Abramsz, 1679. In A. van Dantzig, 1978, p.17.

so they have become insufferable to their neighbours.²³

Asante won its war against Denkyira and went on to become the major power in the Gold Coast until the last quarter of the 19th century. Akwamu rule had equally become insufferable by 1730, and in that year a military alliance of Akyem, Accra and Akuapem polities defeated Akwamu and pushed the remnant across the Volta to their present home east of the Volta. Margaret Field in her *Social Organization of the Ga People* (1940) noted how the insecurity of the slave trade and its concomitant wars facilitated the cohesion of the Ga towns, highlighting how the Ga word for “town” and “nation”, *man*, implied a military confederation. The Ga *man* derived from the Twi *oman*, as the Ga borrowed the political and military organization of Akwamu, the premier Akan military state in the 17th century and early 18th centuries. With this came the stool as a symbol of political office, which the Ga regarded as a “war medicine or fetish.”²⁴

Ivor Wilks has provided several insightful essays on the forest Akan and the emergence of Asante. In one essay, he examines the role of land, labor and gold in a model of early change that resulted in kingdoms such as Asante.²⁵ McCann suggests the contributory role that maize could have played in this early Atlantic era among the forest Akan, whose ecology was protein-rich but deprived of a reliable source of carbohydrates aside from yams that could feed an expanding population. Labor intensive and longer maturing yams did not compare favorably with the high yielding, two harvests a season, maize in terms of feeding expanding forest populations. McCann argues that the introduction of maize at this crucial phase of Akan history increased the availability of food and “in turn, released labor to extend

²³ Ibid., 73. Van Sevenhuysen to Assembly of Ten, Elmina, May 30, 1701.

²⁴ M. J. Field, 1940, p.72-73.

²⁵ I. Wilks, 1993, ch. 2. Wilks’ interpretation of the origins of Akan forest states and Asante has been revised recently in the light of archaeological evidence that pushes Akan settlement in the Gold Coast much earlier before Atlantic contact. See G.L. Chouin and C. R. DeCorse, 2010, p.123-45.

the frontiers of forest settlement and support the development of politics and statecraft.”²⁶

Warfare and the Atlantic slave trade had enormous impact on ritual in the Gold Coast in both the material and cognitive realms. Maize, especially roasted maize, became a logistic of war as it kept for several days.²⁷ And the Asante army used grains of corn to keep count of soldiers lost in war.²⁸ Among the Ga in Accra and its environs, maize had become the major crop by the end of the 17th century. The Frenchman Jean Barbot, in his visits to the Gold Coast in 1678-9 and 1681-2, witnessed just outside of Danish Osu a sacrifice to a lagoon deity to request rain for the maize crop. It is clear that this was the major crop and the object of great concern.²⁹

Atlantic trade also introduced and expanded the availability of European liquor. We saw above that de Marees did not cite European liquor as a major item of trade in the late 16th century. This had changed significantly by the late 17th century from the account of Barbot.

At my first voyage to Cape Corso [Cape Coast], I had a pretty brisk trade for slaves and gold; but at my return thither three years after, I found a significant alteration; the French brandy, whereof I had always a good quantity aboard, being much less demanded, by reason a great quantity of spirits and rum had been brought on that coast by many English trading ships, then on the coast, which oblig'd [sic] all to sell cheaply.³⁰

The expanded availability of European liquor impacted both the ritual and social uses of alcohol. American rum represents a good illustration of the dynamics by which Atlantic commodities were incorporated into distinctively Gold Coast socio-political agendas. Barbot notes the presence of rum on the Gold Coast in the late 17th century. Brooks offers further commentary on the central place of rum and tobacco in American trade to West Africa in the Atlantic era.

²⁶ J. C. McCann, 2005, p. 48. Though McCann based his arguments on Wilks, Chouin and DeCorse also point to the potential role of maize in the growth or renewal of Akan polities after the sudden abandonment of several settlements in the 14th century, which the authors suggest might have been the result of bubonic plague.”

²⁷ It is necessary to indicate that the staple food of the Asante is *fufu*, which is prepared from cassava and plantain. But both cassava and plantain could not last longer than maize and are even much more heavier to carry making the those products unsuitable for purposes of war even though in extreme cases they were used in war.

²⁸ F. A. Ramseyer and J. Kühne, 1875, p.256.

²⁹ P. E. H. Hair, A. Jones and R. Law, ed., 1992, p.579.

³⁰ Hair, Jones and Law, p. 396.

Tobacco and rum were the foundation of American legitimate commerce and the chief source of profits. These, plus cotton cloth, guns, and powder were the staples of the West African trade in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and the main stock in trade of European merchants from all countries. The quality and competitive price of American tobacco and rum ensured their entry into West African markets, whether through official import channels or smuggling.³¹

Rum imported into the Gold Coast came in two types: colorless or “white” and a brownish or golden color. Both found distinct uses in ritual in the Gold Coast.

Incessant warfare from the 17th century had elevated war deities over nature deities. Thus, the Anlo-Ewe promoted *Nyigbla* the war deity and made it the head of the Anlo national pantheon. The Adangme-speaking Krobo placed the war deities *Nadu* and *Kotoklo* at the very center of the political and social lives.³² The King of Asante “owned” all war deities in his realm and their custodians reported to the king. These war deities reportedly demanded sacrifices of blood (human and animal) and delighted in rum with a golden color. *Obaapanin* (the female head of an Asante *abusua* or matrilineage) Afua Pokuaa of Amoaman emphasized that gods liked the golden color of “Bucaneer Rum,” a color she described as *kokoo* (red). Afua Pokuaa’s family serves as custodians for the Asante war deity *Abotirimu*, and the preference of *abosombrafo* (war deities) for golden rum was associated with their penchant for blood.³³ The connection between war deities, warfare, blood and rum was made explicit by one of Huber’s Krobo informants:

In ancient time ... if a warrior brought home an enemy’s head, he was given rum, mixed with some drops of blood, to drink. This, they say, not only protected him against the avenging ghost of the beheaded, but also made him braver.³⁴

For deities who favored golden rum, brandy could be used as a substitute for some for it “has the scent and color the *abosom* [deities] like.”³⁵ Political centralization and social hierarchies in pre-colonial Gold Coast placed premium on the prestige of European liquor, which came to

³¹ G. E. Brooks, Jr., 1970, p.4.

³² S. Greene, 1963.

³³ Akyeampong fieldnotes: Interview with Afua Pokuaa, Kumasi, August 18, 1994.

³⁴ Huber, p 268.

³⁵ Interview with Afua Pokuaa, Kumasi, August 18, 1994.

inform relations of power and patronage. These considerations of prestige were extended into the spirit realm, and colorless gin and schnapps came to serve alongside water as ritual fluids for deities averse to rum and human blood. By contrast war deities among Nawuris preferred sorghum beer (pito). This may reflect the distance of Nawuri settlements from the coast and the incomplete penetration of Atlantic trade goods or a ritual preference for sorghum beer. Juhe-Beaulaton examines the co-existence of maize and millet in Dahomey in the 18th and 19th centuries, and observes that while maize gained ground as the dominant cereal, the kings of Dahomey retained millet for its ritual significance, and it might have acquired special royalty status.³⁶ European colonial imposition in the late 19th century brought about the cessation of war, and British antagonism towards liquor trade by foreign nations to British West Africa in the aftermath of World War I ended German schnapps and American rum imports. In the 20th century, Dutch schnapps and gin sometimes stepped into the ritual role rum had played in the preceding centuries, though rum (Twi: *aworonte*) has not disappeared completely from the ritual landscape.³⁷

In an important article by Raymond Dumett that examined European liquor traffic to the Akan of the Gold Coast in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, he argued that huge imports of European liquor were largely incorporated into ritual uses, especially at funerals, negating missionary assumptions that these huge quantities translated into widespread drunkenness.³⁸ Missionary accounts in the 19th century did acknowledge the social and ritual uses of alcohol. H. C. Monrad, the Danish chaplain for Danish forts and castles on the Gold Coast between 1805 and 1809 reinforced de Marees' comments on the place of alcoholic drinks in socialization and affective gender relations. The Danish headquarters was in Osu in present-day Accra, and much of Monrad's discussion of Africans in the Gold Coast applies to the Ga of Osu. He explicitly references other areas of Danish influence when the Ga of Osu

³⁶ D. Juhe-Beaulaton, 2002.

³⁷ E. Akyeampong, 1996, ch. 4; and D. van den Bersselaar, 2007.

³⁸ R. Dumett, 1974, p.69-101.

were not the focus.

The Negroes are not unfamiliar with the noble feelings of friendship and love. Friends often come together and spend time in talking, smoking tobacco, drinking brandy, or, lacking that, palm wine or *pytho* [pito] – a kind of ale which is brewed from maize.³⁹

References to brandy are numerous in Monrad's *Description*: at funerals for consumption by guests though some is sprinkled on the deceased, and as an offering to indigenous priests and the deities they served, though Monrad suspected that it was the priests who desired the brandy.⁴⁰ In the quote above we see again the reference to *pito* brewed from maize, though we have noted also the record of European confusion prior to the 19th century in accurately identifying maize, sorghum and millet along the West African coast. Monrad makes clear that maize, together with chickens and eggs, were important ritual foods for spiritual beings, including deities. Such ritual offerings of food may be placed on public roads -- junctions were charged sites in ritual landscapes -- or at the shrine of the deity.⁴¹

Monrad describes three annual festivals of the Ga, one of which is clearly a harvest festival at which new yams and maize are consumed.

The Negroes of Accara celebrate three feasts annually: one on the occasion of the earth's fertility, which comes in about the end of July. The dates are never fixed exactly. This is called the 'yams custom', and before it is celebrated they are not permitted to eat of the new yams or of the year's harvest. It is believed that it would be dangerous, indeed fatal, before this [celebration]. Amid song, dance, gambling and carousing is held the sacrifice to the fetish of yams, maize, *gobbegobber* (a variety of red beans), etc., and as long as the festivities last yams are eaten, as well as other products cultivated in the earth at the time of the year.⁴²

At the "yams custom" maize makes its appearance alongside a crop indigenous to West Africa and associated with autochthonous deities. Among the Ga on the coast, maize appeared early as a ritual food in contrast to the yam festivals of interior peoples. Ga society received many refugees in the pre-colonial period. Many of these refugees were Akan peoples fleeing war, and they brought their yam-eating war deities.

³⁹ H. C. Monrad, 1822, translated from the Danish by S.A. Winsnes, 2008, p.35.

⁴⁰ Ibid., 38-39, 50.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Ibid., 56.

Margaret Field, a colonial anthropologist later turned ethno-psychiatrist, wrote two major studies on Ga religion and medicine, and the social organization of the Ga.⁴³ In the first she conveniently provides a typology of Ga deities, categorizing them into four groups distinguished by their dances and music. The aboriginal deities (Kple deities), worshipped before the arrival of the Ga by Obutu speakers (a lost language), were agricultural deities, the major ones associated with the lagoons along the Ga coastline. The related Adangme peoples from the Krobo area brought a second category of deities. A third category comprised deities based in the Ga town of Labadi, whose songs are in Ga. These were primarily war deities, products of the Atlantic era of warfare, but who today have absorbed many of the agricultural rites of the older gods. Their main festival is *Homowo*. Finally are deities that are yam-eating deities acquired from the Fanti, Akwamu and Akuapem. Field describes these as “all war-gods ... purchased by the Ga in comparatively recent times to assist in war.”⁴⁴

Instructively, the aboriginal deities associated with the lagoons, such as Sakumo of Tema, are associated with water or corn wine and not with strong European liquor. In the *gbatsu* (shrine room) of Sakumo can be found only pots of holy water. At the festival of *Kpledzoin* Tema, with Sakumo at the center, only corn wine was used in libation and consumption. Water was the most potent fluid in ritual during *Kpledzo*. This festival was one of renewal that ensured rainfall, abundance of lagoon fish, and the fertility of women.⁴⁵ The Ga town of Labadi provides a striking contrast. Ga towns have several quarters of assimilated immigrants, and the insecurity of the Atlantic era with its concomitant warfare and slave trade placed a premium on incorporating outsiders, who assisted in the defense of towns. Labadi deities included aboriginal ones whose ritual food was *fotolii*, some of which were snake deities worshipped by the original inhabitants; and war deities like *La Kpa* brought by Bonny people from Nigeria, and *Aflim*, the yam-eating, Fanti-singing war god. Human sacrifice was

⁴³M. J. Field, 1937.

⁴⁴ Field, p. 5-6.

⁴⁵ Ibid., ch. 3.

a feature of war deities like *La Kpa*, as well as libations of golden colored rum. Rum came to inform hierarchical relations, becoming the drink of choice offered by the living to ancestors at the festival of *homowo*, and from juniors to elders, for example as pacification by sons-in-law who offended fathers-in-law. Field described *homowo*, celebrated in July or August, as the “very pivot of tribal life”; it united the living with the dead.⁴⁶ At *homowo kpekpei* (from cooked maize dough) was the food given to ancestors, something they had eaten in their lifetime, as distinct from *fotolii*, expected by Kple or aboriginal deities.⁴⁷ Importantly, both *fotolii* and *kpekpei* were made from maize, making it a food of nature deities, ancestors and the living. *Fotolii*, made of coarse corn dough, was lumpy. It was mixed with palm oil and placed in containers in shrines and road junctions. *Kpekpei* was sieved, making it closer to the consistency of *gari* (grated, roasted cassava) or *couscous*. Also kneaded with red palm oil, it was accompanied with palm nut soup cooked with fish and vegetables. Its smooth consistency allowed it to be sprinkled in homes around the town for ancestors, and shared with the living for which it remained a special food.⁴⁸ Maize thus entered the ritual landscape of the Ga quite early both as a food and ritual drink (corn wine).

Strikingly, the yam-eating gods of the Ga are the borrowed gods from inland Akan speaking peoples. Here maize, introduced from the Americas, has assumed an anteriority based on its association with nature/agricultural deities such as lagoons, while the indigenous West African crop yam is linked to Akan war deities and more recent healing medicines and their activating supernatural forces or deities (Ga: *dzemawon*). Maize has become a symbol of fertility among the Ga, and in ceremonies like *popo*, performed for first-time pregnant women, maize was literally rubbed on the abdomen of the pregnant woman.⁴⁹ Mediums (Ga: *wo'yei*, pl; *wo'yo*, sing.) of deities and other supernatural beings, usually female and often

⁴⁶ Ibid., 45.

⁴⁷ Ibid., ch. 5.

⁴⁸ I am grateful to Tete Cobbah for the distinction between the two corn based foods: *fotolii* and *kpekpei*. Personal communication February 16, 2013.

⁴⁹ Field, 1937, p. 167.

married to medicine men, were reported during the colonial period to regularly hold an annual yam feast (*yéléyeli*) to thank their deities.⁵⁰

Once a year, usually in January, every medicine-man [also] holds *ayéléyeli* feast of his own. He kills a goat for his medicines, gives each of them rum and yam food, thanking them for their year's good work and asking them to continue.⁵¹

In the interior yam continued its reign as the chief ritual food of deities, both on the Akuapem hills just to the north of Accra, and further north in what became the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast.

Yam and Ritual in the Gold Coast Interior

The association of yam with *odwira* festivals among interior Akan states has given *odwira* the strong coloration of a harvest festival. *Odwira* was celebrated by the Akwamu, Akuapem, Akyem, and Asante. At this festival the political authorities and religious leaders ate new yams, marking an important transition in the agricultural calendar. Nineteenth century European visitors such as Bowdich and Ramseyer in Asante, who witnessed this festival, however, noted its significant political agenda, and McCaskie has centered *odwira* in his study of state ideology in precolonial Asante.⁵² But the Akan states mentioned had deep connections to the Atlantic trade, and their worlds were transformed by this encounter. The resulting tensions, perhaps, may be gleaned in the training of priestesses at the shrine of the autochthonous Guan deity, Akonedi, at Larteh in Akuapem. Maize is tabooed to Akonedi, and on Tuesdays and Fridays, when the deity enters the shrine through possession, anyone associated with the shrine is prohibited from eating kenkey or to bring maize dough into the shrine.⁵³ At Akonedi the ritual food is mashed yam, either white (*etofufu*) or mixed with palm oil (*etokokoo* or “red” mashed yam). Instructively, Akonedi does not travel, and its priestess cannot travel across the sea.⁵⁴ This, perhaps, exhibits an antipathy between this pristine deity

⁵⁰ Field, 1937, p. 108.

⁵¹ Ibid., 126. From Field's work, references to gin use among the Ga come rather late, and they deal with recent witch-finding deities such as Nana Tongu or as fines in court (pp. 141 & 189-90).

⁵² T. E. Bowdich 3rd ed. 1966; F. A. Ramseyer and J. Kühne, 1875, and 1995.

⁵³ K. A. Opoku, 1978, p.77-78. Kenkey is locally known by the Ga as Komi and the Akan as Dorkunu. It was at first a meal that was consumed among the coastal communities of Ghana. Now it is consumed throughout the country.

⁵⁴ Akyeampong fieldnotes: Interview with Okomfoo Ataa, Priestess to Akonedi and Asuo Gyebi, Mampongten (Ashanti), July 27, 2008. Asuo Gyebi serves as an executioner deity to Akonedi. Asuo Gyebi's partiality for “White Horse Whisky” is reminiscent of the war deities' penchant for golden colored rum.

and the forces or influences unleashed by the Atlantic trade in contradistinction to the war deities that thrived within the context of Atlantic slaving. Shrines on hilltop settlements on the Akuapem range, such as Kyenku at Obosomase, provided refuge for runaway slaves, even coming into conflict with Danish slave owners who pursued their slaves to the shrine in an area they considered their sphere of influence. In 1843 the Danish Governor Edward Cartensen marched on the Kyenku shrine in the company of twenty armed soldiers to retrieve two runaway slaves.⁵⁵

Coastal deities were compelled to confront the Atlantic slave trade head on, and many were compromised by its demands. Nyigbla in Anlo lost face when it was proven that female devotees in training who had reportedly died in the sacred grove had actually been sold as slaves into the Atlantic slave trade.⁵⁶ And the Nana Tabir shrine in Cape Coast, a sea deity revered before the advent of the Europeans and the Atlantic slave trade, who facilitated sea-fishing and later European maritime trade, became an agent of the Atlantic slave trade, its complicity revealed in the discourse of Tabir's "whiteness" -- a deity that spoke English and showed a weakness for red wine and margarine.⁵⁷ We look further north at the Nawuri, a Guan-speaking people in Northern Ghana, and their yam-eating festival, *Kajoji*, for clues on the impact of the Atlantic world on the ritual landscape of the deep interior, before we conclude our essay on the Gold Coast and ritual during the Atlantic era.

The Yam eating festival (Kajoji) of the Balai Nawuris of Northern Ghana.

J.E.K. Kuma's research into the history and cultures of northern Guans provides very useful insights into crops and their uses in everyday life and festivities. He notes a number of similarities between southern and northern cultural practices in Ghana based on the performance of everyday ritual. In particular he indicates that as far as harvest festivals are concerned there seem to be profound similarity in their celebration among Guans in Ghana.⁵⁸ Besides Kuma, Goody's study of the cultivation of crops and the consumption of food among the LoDargaba and Gonja offers useful insights into the role of food in festivals in Northern Ghana. Whereas the LoDagarba celebrate a sorghum festival, 'pagan' Gonjas celebrate the yam festival.⁵⁹ Even though Goody did not define who the pagan Gonjas were, he nonetheless relates how through the yam rituals Gonja ruling elites are fortified through the war rites of

⁵⁵ Y. Bredwa-Mensah, 2008, p.139-140.

⁵⁶ Greene, 1996..

⁵⁷ A. Apter, February 3, 2014).

⁵⁸ J.E.K. Kuma 1965, p.99.

⁵⁹ J. Goody, 1982.

gbandau.⁶⁰ Levtzion usefully categorises Gonja society into three estates: the Gbanya who are the rulers, the Nyamase, the pagan commoners, and the Kramo or the local Muslim community.⁶¹ Braimah categorized the Guan ethnic groups of Nawuri, Nchumburi and Mpre as part of the pagan group that Ndewura Jakpa came along with from Mande in Mali. The Nawuris and Nchumburu composed a special warrior group called the 'mbonwuras'.⁶² Considering the fact that the Nchumburu and Mpre celebrate the yam festival but do not have *gbandau* in their yam festival, the pagan Gonja Yam festival described by Goody refers to that of the Nawuri.

In addition to the observations made by Kuma and Goody, our field research among the Guans in Northern Ghana confirm the incorporation of yams and sorghum in most of their ritual ceremonies, particularly the aboriginal Balai Nawuri. Aspects of the yam festival are very much similar to the Akan and other southern Guans.

Nawuris have hunting, farming and fishing as their occupations, the major occupation being farming with specialization in the cultivation of yams.⁶³ Among Nawuris a father is obligated to give his newly married son about one thousand yam sets for him to cultivate his own farm. If the son is not married but turns thirty years, the father is equally required to do the same. It is instructive to add that the concept of yam giving at the attainment of adulthood and marriage is not limited to the Nawuris alone and can be found in other cultures as well. For example Dobald Tuzin points out a similar ritual in Papua New Guinea where newlyweds are given a supply of yams by both sets of parents, sufficient to feed them until they harvest their own first yam. Specimen from each of the two lots of yams are set aside for later planting and form the basis of the couples' lifetime of yam cultivation.⁶⁴

Among Nawuris, yam is considered both as an economic and a social product and its cultivation is a cultural necessity. It is therefore not out of place that among all crops grown in the area, yam is selected for celebration through festival. Ntewusu indicates that the yam festival is celebrated to thank the almighty God (*ebuare*), the deities (*agbiri/edakpa*) and ancestors (*aboni/echaban*) for protecting the people throughout the year and ensuring that they have lived to see the next season.

There are about six varieties of yams in Nawuri, but it is either *larbako* or *puna* that is used for the yam festival. The reason is that these two types of yam are considered the best

⁶⁰ Goody, 1982, p.77-78

⁶¹ N. Levtzion, 1968.

⁶² J.Braimah and J.R. Goody, 1967, p.31

⁶³ Other crops grown in order of importance include, cassava, guinea corn, groundnuts, maize, and beans among others.

⁶⁴ D. F. Tuzin, 1972, p.236

quality. Both *puna* and *larbako* belong to the *Dioscorea rotundata* family.⁶⁵ Discussion of the yam festival among Balai Nawuris will be divided into two parts. The first gives a narration of the processes involved in celebrating the festival and the second section is an analysis. As previously noted, there is a ritual calendar for the yam festival, which usually takes place around July. .⁶⁶

On the appointed day of the festival every family head comes home from their farms with yams covered in leaves, hidden in sacks or brought in at night and sent to the heads of the respective clans. The yams are brought concealed or at night to avoid people seeing the tubers before the yam eating rituals are performed. Seeing it is considered pollution and spoils the sacredness of the yams. Besides, yams are produced from the earth (*esuwule*), which is considered a deity second only to God. This perception is evidenced by the worship of Nana Esuwule (mother earth) by the people of Balai. As a product from one of the deities it is important that yams are concealed until all rites associated with it are performed.

In the night the priest of Wurachina shrine pours libation with *pito* brewed from sorghum and perform sacrifices to the Wurachina shrine. Immediately the sacrifices are made, the elders responsible for cooking the meal move to a refuse dump and pluck the feathers off the fowls. In addition they chant to the spirits of the night telling them what is about to happen and begging them to spare them any harm. Similarly, they invite all benign spiritual beings from the unseen world to participate in the cooking and any other activity associated with the ceremony. Seven corn cobs (*abuyo-lanti*) are picked from the refuse dump and brought into the ritual space and burnt. The prepared fowls, the ash and charcoal from the burnt corn cobs as well as other shrubs and herbs are ground and boiled with the heart of a lion. When the yam is well cooked it is pounded into a ball (Nawuri: *kapali*), popularly referred to as *fufu*. All those present would carry the *fufu* and the soup to a forest located about three hundred meters south of Balai. This forest houses the Anwulachin/Wurachina shrine. Libation is poured with *pito* and the *fufu* is served first to the shrine and ancestors. After which the *fufu* is brought back to the village and to the house of the Anwulachina priest. It is here that the food is eaten. The *gbandawu* rites are performed immediately the food is eaten. *Gbandawu* in Nawuri Guan means dirt/filth. Hence this rite is performed to cleanse (purify) the whole land of its dirt (pollution). Here water, *pito* and schnapps are brought and used for the purification.

⁶⁵ Other varieties grown in the area include *Dioscorea cayenensis*, *Dioscorea alata* (Water yam), *Dioscorea esculenta*, *Dioscorea dumetorum*, and *Dioscorea bulbifera*.

⁶⁶ Information provided by John Mane Kinyinkide interviewed in Balai on December 27, 2012.

The second part of the yam festival has to do with Siga rites. Siga is a deity for the Kabisu clan of Balai. This is the deity for hunting and war. Siga is unique because it is the only deity in Balai that resides with the people in their house, the rest could be found in the forests, in holes, on the top of trees and in wells. As a war deity it occupies a special place during the yam festival. Items required as part of the Siga rites include the meat and tail of an elephant as well as the meat and skin of an antelope. In times past the jaw of a lion or tiger was also required. Finally there should be available at least seven guns and unspecified rounds of ammunition. Yam is cooked and pounded into a ball of fufu and a separate pot for soup is also put on fire. As the soup boils, shea butter is put into the barrel of the guns and also on the triggers. The guns, which are loaded with bullets, are lowered into the soup until the shea butter melts and drop in the soup. This is mixed with the soup. After the food is prepared (comprising the fufu and soup) portions are cut and placed on the Siga deity and the rest eaten. In the olden days, that day marked the beginning of initiation of young boys into the hunting and warrior cult of the Balai Nawuris. This has stopped since the late 1980s.

An important aspect of the yam festival is the incorporation of pito in all the celebrations. Specially brewed pito is used in pouring libation whether at the Wurachina, Kankpe or Siga shrines. After the deities have been given their share, the pito is served first to all the shrine priests and then the rest of the general public. It is important to indicate that even though pito is brewed, sold and drank on a daily basis in Balai, the one brewed for purposes of the yam festival is considered spiritual and not ordinary. For example the deities must taste it first followed by the priests. Indeed it is popularly believed among the indigenes that this particular pito provides spiritual insights and discernment for the priests whenever they drink it. The sharing and drinking of pito culminates in a hunters' dance (Kakpancha) which is performed throughout the day thus marking the end of the yam festival.

As previously noted the yam festival offers intriguing analytical insights. From what has been stated above, among the Nawuris the significance of yams and sorghum extends far beyond their value as staple foods. Through the festival one sees the link between ancestors, deities, trade and warfare in Nawuri society. It is important to point out that most of the guns that were acquired by the Nawuris was courtesy of the Atlantic trade. Guns were incorporated into the society and played an important role in the lives of the Nawuris both in warfare and hunting. Nawuris have not only fought wars to maintain their territorial integrity they have also been hired as mercenaries especially by Gonja rulers to fight their wars. The involvement of Gonja royals in the gbandawu festival of the Nawuris therefore brings out these historical connections between food, spirituality, warfare, trade and state

formation. Not only does the incorporation of guns in the festivals indicate the trade links between the north and the south, the gbandau festival furnishes an opportunity to renew and sacrifice to potent war deities such as Kankpe and to the hunter and warrior cult called Siga. We note how the Nawuri war deity lives with the people in contrast to the nature deities, underscoring the protective role the deity came to play in the life of Nawuris during insecure times. The war deity came to be closely associated with community and culture. Though the specific impact of the Atlantic slave trade on Nawuri society would require additional research, their ritual memory does indicate that the area was not impervious to the trade, as evidenced in the ritual presence of corn cobs and guns. During the yam festival young boys are initiated into the warrior cult of Siga. Their initiation includes the ritual eating of yam mixed with gunpowder. Such adaptations and the connections between Atlantic commodities (guns) and indigenous foods (yam) and festivals suggest that this could be an important area of research.

Conclusion

Commensality among the living informed communion between the living and the spiritual world (ancestors and deities). Hence food and drink were offered ritually to the dead and to deities. This paper has examined how the advent of Atlantic trade, the introduction of new world crops such as maize and European liquor, and the expansion and consolidation of states on the Gold Coast impacted the landscape of ritual. Political centralization and social hierarchy drew on an elaborated range of consumer goods in the marking of difference. The powerful coveted European liquors, and offered these prestige goods to their ancestors and deities. Even new food crops from the Americas could not escape these local hierarchies: maize became an important crop, sometimes fed to the gods; while cassava remained marginal, among the Akan associated with the poor and slaves. War deities who became more prominent in the era of the Atlantic slave trade showed a preference for golden-colored rum brought from the Americas, just as they were also associated with blood sacrifices. We examined the tensions that emerged between war deities and nature/agricultural deities, and how for some local deities such as Akonedi of the Larteh Guan symbols from the Atlantic world became tabooed. We look at the northern Guan community of Balai Nawuri for clues of the impact of the Atlantic world on the deep interior or whether their relative distance cushioned them from the disruptive developments of Atlantic trade. Through the yam festival (*Kajoji*) of the Balai Nawuri, we have examined how through ritual they framed and renewed their world. Here the prestigious ritual food was yam with water and *pito* from sorghum as the most important ritual drinks. The prominent role of the hunters' association and their deity

Siga in rounding off the yam festival, including the dramatic place of guns even in the cooking of the ritual food, may underscore the key role of the association in the defense of the community during insecure times and the utility of firearms introduced through the Atlantic trade. Maize, in the form of burnt cobs enters the rituals of the yam festival, another intriguing Atlantic connection. Thus, Balai Nawuri, while distant from the Atlantic seaboard, with rituals that seemed to close it off from this world, was not isolated from the transformative processes of the Atlantic. Rosalind Shaw has demonstrated how ritual memory can be revealing of the traumatic era of the Atlantic slave trade.⁶⁷ Juxtaposing rituals of war deities along the coast with those of Guan nature deities in the Akuapem hills and among the northern Nawuri, we see different levels of engagement with the Atlantic trade based on distance from the coast. Atlantic slaving entwined with the rise and fall of states in the Gold Coast, and these developments promoted the rise of war deities in insecure times and threatened the primacy of nature deities. These developments are reflected in the new ritual importance of maize and European liquor along the coast compared to the ritual retention of yams and pito brewed from sorghum in the interior. Both responses speak to the transformative impact of Atlantic trade in precolonial Gold Coast.

References

- Abaka, E.K., 2005, *'Kola is God's Gift': Agricultural Production, Export Initiatives and the Kola Industry in Asante*, Athens, Ohio University Press.
- Akyeampong, E., 1996, *Drink, Power, and Cultural Change: A Social History of Alcohol in Ghana 1800 to Recent Times*, Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
- Akyeampong, E., 2002, "AhenfoNsa (the 'Drink of Kings'): Dutch Schnapps and Ritual in Ghanaian History," in I. van Kessel, ed., *Merchants, Missionaries and Migrants: 300 Years of Dutch-Ghanaian Relations*, Amsterdam, KIT Publishers.
- Arhin, K., (ed) 1974, *The papers of George Ekem Ferguson, a Fante official of the government of the Gold Coast, 1890-1897*, Leiden, Afrika-Studiecentrum.
- Apter, A., 2014, "History in the Dungeon: Atlantic Slavery and the Spirit of Capitalism in Cape Coast Castle, Ghana" Harvard University, Africa Workshop.
- van den Bersselaar, D., 2007, *King of Drinks: Schnapps Gin from Modernity to Tradition*, Leiden, Brill.

⁶⁷Rosalind Shaw, *Memories of the Slave Trade: Ritual and the Historical Imagination in Sierra Leone* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002).

Bosman, W., 1721, *A New and Accurate Description of the Coast of Guinea*, 2nd edition, London, J. Knapton.

Braimah, J.A. and J.R. Goody, 1967, *Salaga: The struggle for power*, London, Longmans.

Buah, F.K., 1980, *A History of Ghana*, London, Macmillan.

Bredwa-Mensah, Y., 2008, "Slavery and Resistance on Nineteenth Century Danish Plantations in Southeastern Gold Coast, Ghana," *African Study Monographs*, 29 (3) , p.139-140.

Brookes, G. E. Jr., 1970, *Yankee Traders, Old Coasters and African Middlemen: A History of American Legitimate Trade with West African in the Nineteenth Century*, Boston, Boston University Press.

Chastanet, M., 1998, "Introduction et place du maïs au Sahel occidental (Sénégal-Mauritanie)", in, Chastanet M. (éd.), *Plantes et paysages d'Afrique. Une histoire à explorer*, Paris: Karthala-CRA.

Chouin, G. L. and DeCorse, C. R., 2010, "Prelude to the Atlantic Trade: New Perspectives on Southern Ghana's Pre-Atlantic History (800-1500)," *Journal of African History*, 51 (2), p.123-45.

Curto, J.C., 2004, *Enslaving Spirits: The Portuguese Alcohol Trade at Luanda and its Hinterland c.1550-1830*, Leiden, Brill.

van Dantzig, A., 1978, *The Dutch and the Guinea Coast 1674-1742: A Collection of Documents from the General State Archive at the Hague*, Accra, Ghana Academy of Arts and Sciences.

Dakubu, M.E.K., 2006, "Linguistics and History in West Africa," in, Emmanuel Kwaku Akyeampong, *Themes in West Africa's History*, Oxford, James Curry.

Der, B. G., 1998, *The Slave Trade in Northern Ghana*, Accra: Woeli.

Dickson, K. B., 1993, *A Historical Geography of Ghana*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

Dumett, R., 1974 "The Social Impact of the European Liquor Trade on the Akan of Ghana (Gold Coast and Asante), 1875-1910," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, 5, p.69-101

Field, M. J., 1937, *Religion and Medicine of the Ga People*, London, Oxford University Press

Field, M. J., 1940, *Social Organization of the Ga People*, London, Crown Agents.

Garrard, T., 1980, *Akan Weights and the Gold Trade*, London, Longman.

Greene, S. E., 1996, *Gender, Ethnicity, and Social Change on the Lower Guinea Coast: A History of the Anlo-Ewe*, Portsmouth, Heinemann.

Hair, P. E. H. Jones A, and Law, R., 1992, ed., *Barbot on Guinea: The Writings of Jean Barbot on West Africa 1678-1712*, Vol. II, London, The Hakluyt Society.

Huber, H., 1963, *The Krobo: Traditional social and Religious Life of a West African People* St. Augustin, Anthropos Institute.

Juhé-Beaulaton, D., 1990, "La diffusion du maïs sur la Côte de l'Or et des Esclaves aux XVII et XVIII siècles," *Review Française d'Histoire d'Outre Mer*, 77, p.177-98

Juhé-Beaulaton, D., 2002, 'L'alimentation des hommes, des *vodoun* et des ancêtres,' in, Chastanet M., Fauvelle-Aymar F. X. and Juhe-Beaulaton D. (éd.), *Cuisine et société en Afrique, histoire, saveurs, savoir-faire*, Paris, Karthala.

Kea, R., 1982, *Settlements, Trade and Politics in Seventeenth-Century Gold Coast*, Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University Press.

Kuma, J. E. K., 1969, *Kete Krachi Traditions*, Legon, Institute of African Studies.

La Fleur, J.D., 2003, "The Culture of Crops on the Gold Coast (West Africa) from the earliest Times to circa 1850", Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Virginia.

La Fleur, J.D., 2012. *Fusion Foodways of Africa's Gold Coast in the Atlantic Era*, Leiden, Brill.

Levtzion, N., 1968, *Muslims and Chiefs in West Africa: a Study of Islam in the Middle Volta Basin in the Pre-Colonial Period*. Oxford, The Clarendon Press.

de Marees, P., 1987, *Description and Historical Account of the Gold Kingdom of Guinea (1602)*. Translated and edited van Dantzig A. and A. Jones, Oxford, Oxford University Press.

McCann, J. C., 2005, *Maize and Grace: Africa's Encounter with a New World Crop 1500-2000*, Cambridge, Harvard University Press.

Miracle, M. P., 1963, "Interpretation of Evidence on the Introduction of Maize into West Africa," *Africa* 33, (2), p.132-135.

Monrad, H. C., 2008, *A Description of the Guinea Coast and its Inhabitants* (Copenhagen, 1822), translated from the Danish by S. A. Winsnes, Two Views from Christiansborg Castle Vol. II, Accra, Sub-Saharan Publishers.

Ntewusu, S. A., 1998, 'A History of the Nawuris of Northern Ghana'. B.A. Long Essay, History Department, University of Ghana,

Ohadike, D. C., 1981, "The Influenza Pandemic of 1918-19 and the Spread of Cassava Cultivation on the Lower Niger," *Journal of African History*, 22, (3), p.379-91.

Opoku, K. A., 1978, *West African Traditional Religion*, Accra, FEP International.

Ramseyer, F. A. and Kühne, J., 1875, *Four Years in Ashantee*, London, James Nisbet and Co.

Shaw, R., 2002, *Memories of the Slave Trade: Ritual and the Historical Imagination in Sierra Leone*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press.

Shumway, R., 2011, *The Fante and the Transatlantic Slave Trade*, Rochester, University of Rochester Press.

Stahl, A. B., 2001, *Making History in Banda: Anthropological Visions of Africa's Past* Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

Tuzin, D. F., 1972, Yam Symbolism in the Sepik : An Interpretative Account. *Southwestern Journal of Anthropology*, 28 (3), p. 230-254

Wilks, I., 1993, *Forests of Gold: Essays on the Akan and the Kingdom of Asante*, Athens, Ohio University Press.

Wilks, I., 2001, *Akwamu 1640-1750: A Study of the Rise and Fall of a West African Empire* Trondheim, Norwegian University of Science and Technology.